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NSRB

49144

1 February 1950

MEMORANDUM FOR: Assistant Director, ORE

SUBJECT: Economic Intelligence

1. Attached hereto is an advanced copy of the memorandum which Mr. Steelman, Chairman of the NSRB, proposes to submit to the NSC on the above subject. He is a member of the NSC so naturally has the privilege of doing this in the manner in which he prefers.

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2. When [redacted] left this copy with the Director on 31 January, the Director said that he thought the same result could be accomplished in a few words by the NSRB requesting intelligence support of CIA with regard to foreign economic intelligence. [redacted] preferred to use a page and a half to say this.

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3. The Director thinks it is a good idea to have this come to us through the NSC from the NSRB as it will allay some of the habitual fears of the other IAC agencies (if it really does get through the NSC!).

4. However, you will note that this calls for only a study of requirements and facilities and then a plan to be prepared for the NSC.

5. This, of course, means no ready solution of the economic intelligence problem during the next year or two judging from past experiences. The last plan we prepared under NSC direction was on a much simpler subject than this and was completed by CIA last August. No action so far as we know has been taken on that plan to date, so I am not at all optimistic that this "study" and "plan" will ever solve the economic intelligence problem.

6. In this connection, see page 23 of the Report on the 4 Papers submitted to the DCI by State Department enclosed with the DCI's circular memorandum of December 30 to the IAC members. We might best set up such an interdepartmental economic intelligence committee along the lines of the Interdepartmental Scientific Intelligence Committee and have part of its early work devoted to the study and plan to be called for by the NSRB. In this connection, see DCI 3/3 on scientific intelligence.

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The other people in COAPS think I'm too pessimistic.

7. When this is more definite and you have thought this over for a while, get in touch with COAPS for a meeting before taking any interdepartmental action whatsoever.

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Coordination, Operations  
and Policy Staff

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cc:

